



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

16486

36

1648.6.36



Harvard College Library

FROM THE

LANE FUND

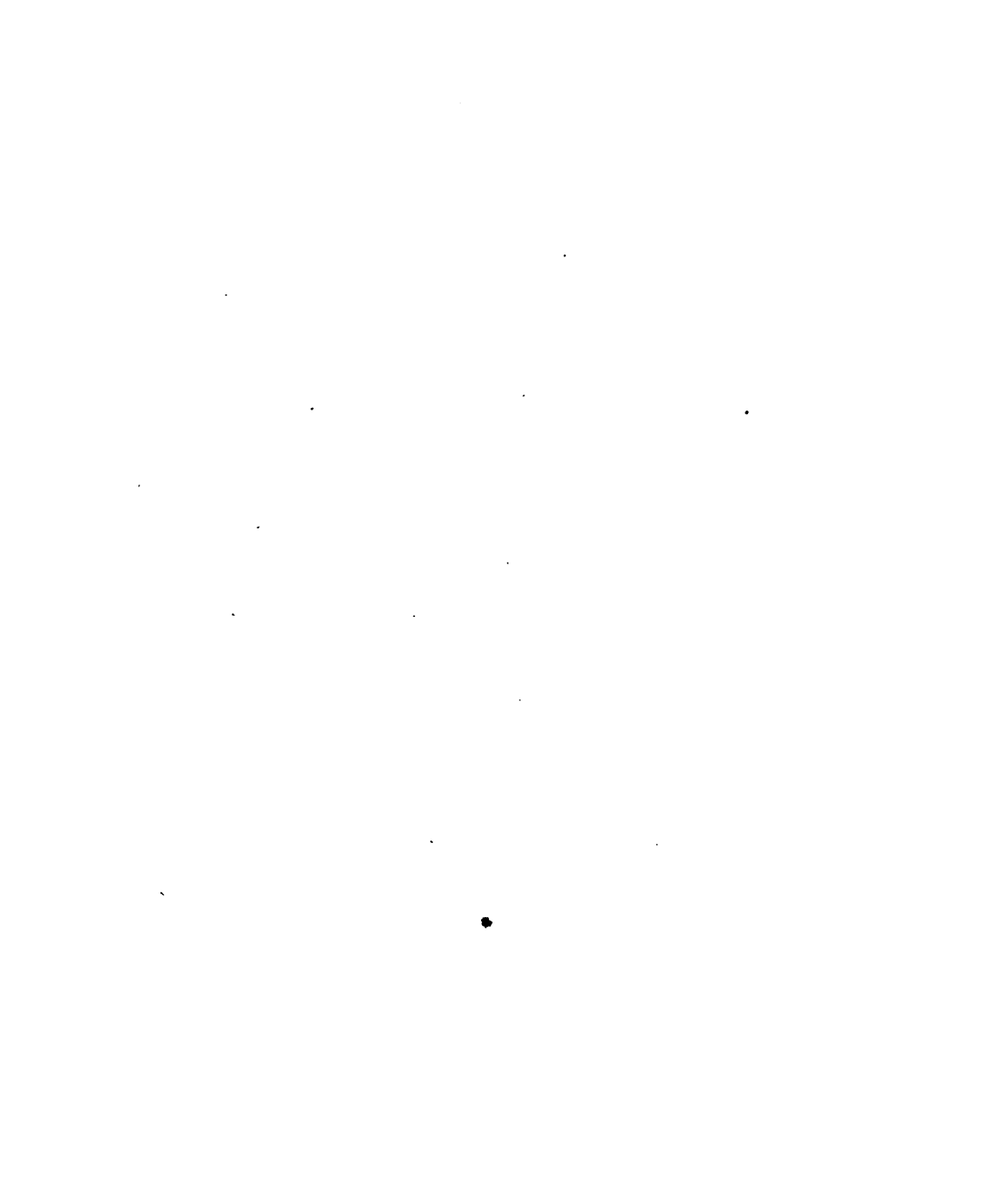
The sum of \$5000 was given by FREDERICK ATHEARN
LANE, of New York, N.Y., (Class of 1849), on
Commencement Day, 1863. "The annual
interest only to be expended in the
purchase of books for the
Library."





A
PROSPECT OF SOCIETY

GOLDSMITH



©

A

PROSPECT OF SOCIETY

BY

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

BEING THE EARLIEST FORM OF HIS POEM

THE TRAVELLER

NOW FIRST REPRINTED FROM THE UNIQUE ORIGINAL

WITH A REPRINT OF THE FIRST EDITION OF

THE TRAVELLER

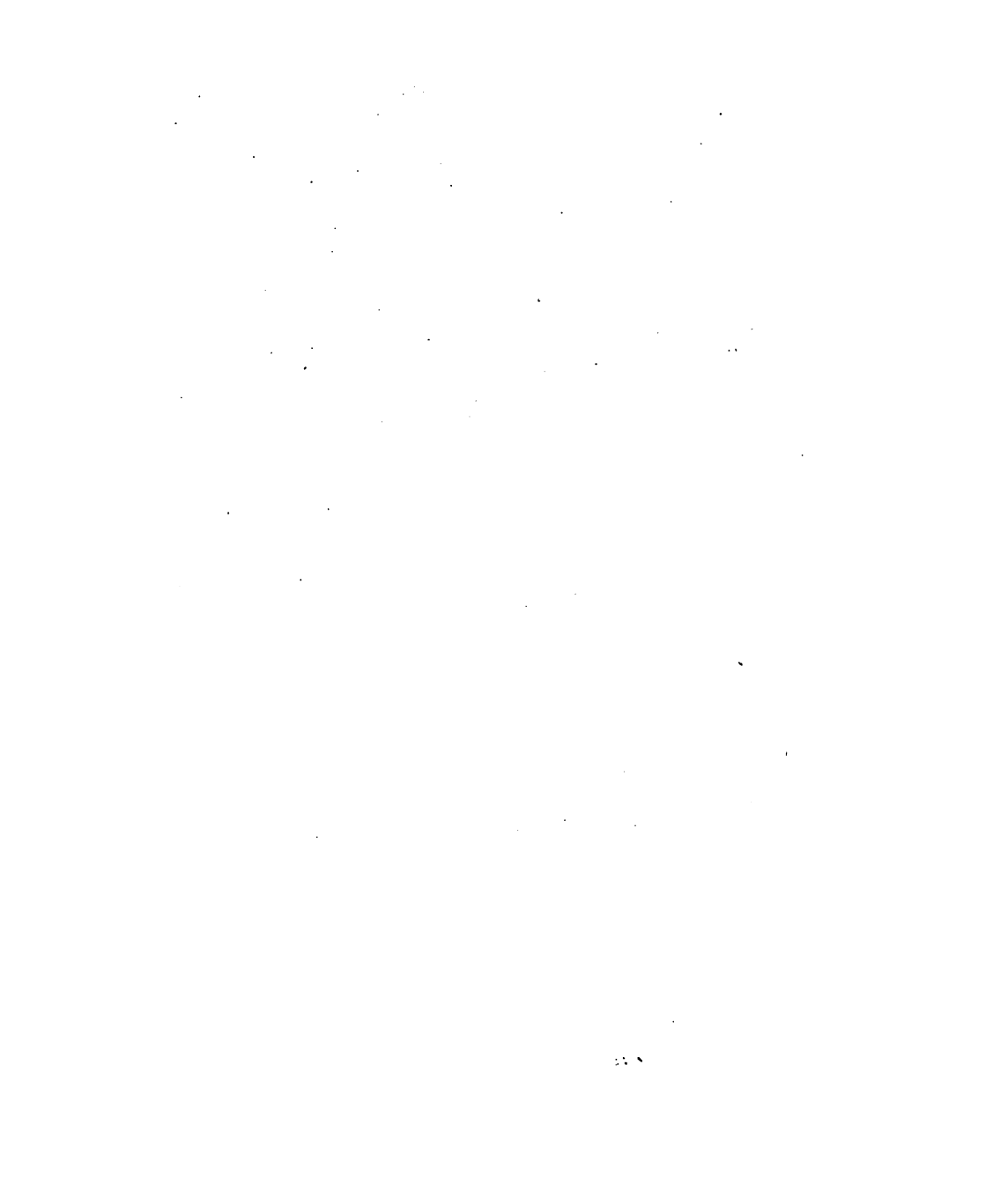
EDITED BY BERTRAM DOBELL

LONDON

PUBLISHED BY THE EDITOR

77 CHARING CROSS ROAD, W.C.

1902



A
PROSPECT OF SOCIETY

GOLDSMITH

His age's cynic coarseness touched him not,
Nor on his fine sweet nature left a blot.

A Shakespeare mortals ne'er may see again,
Nor Milton's narrower yet intenser brain ;
Nor e'en another Goldsmith, since our earth
But at its own good time gives genius birth,
And genius, though for endless cycles made,
Is still in colours of its time arrayed.

Yet though a Goldsmith we no more may view,
I dare to say, my friend ! there shines in you
Much of his fine humanity ; his clean
Unjaundiced view of life : the outlook keen
That with a sunny brightness gilds whate'er
It looks upon, and ever findeth there
The good that serves its grossness to redeem,
And sees of light in deepest shade a gleam.
You, too, though with a difference, possess
His playful humour, void of bitterness ;
You see, as he, men's faults and follies, yet
Do not their better qualities forget,
And ever while you rally them you show
Your raillery from sympathy doth flow.
His patient art is yours likewise, which ne'er
Doth time or thought upon your subject spare,
Which rests not till to perfect form 'tis brought,
A finished fabric from the loom of thought.

To you, a poet, I, a rhymers, send
These lines that I, for once, may call you friend !

PREFACE.

THERE are few English poems which were subjected to more careful and studious revision, and finally made their appearance in a more perfect form, than "The Traveller." It is hardly too much to say that nearly every couplet in it was polished with equal care until it was scarcely possible to improve upon it. Nor is it less admirable for the manner in which part is fitted to part, so that each shall add to the general effect, and all shall unite to form a perfect whole. One does not usually think of Goldsmith as the laborious artist and conscientious critic of his own productions; but there can be no doubt that on his chief poems he lavished as much time and pains as even Gray would have thought necessary. These facts, it is true, are not unknown, since most of Goldsmith's biographers have been in some degree aware of them; but it is only now that, by an accident, it has become possible to estimate fully the care and pains by which Goldsmith converted what we might almost call a set of unconnected verses into so perfect an organic whole as we possess in "The Traveller."

Looking recently over a parcel of pamphlets which I had purchased, I came upon some loose leaves which were headed "A Prospect of Society." The title struck me as familiar* ; and I had only to read a few lines to recognise them as belonging to "The Traveller." But the opening lines of my fragment are not the opening lines of the poem as it was published : in fact the first two lines of "A Prospect of Society" are lines 353-4 in the first edition of "The Traveller"—as here reprinted. A further examination of the fragment which I had discovered showed that it is not what is usually understood as a "proof" of "The Traveller," but rather the material, as yet formless and unarranged, out of which it was to be finally evolved.

Is it necessary for me to apologise for publishing this fragment, and thus revealing the secrets of Goldsmith's methods of composition ? Surely not : for it must be a matter of praise rather than of reproach to any author that he was solicitous to make his work as perfect as he could. That Goldsmith, always needy and pressed by duns as we know him to have been, had an artistic conscience which forbade him to publish hasty or undigested work was most honourable to him ; and his reputation must gain rather than suffer from an exhibition of the careful manner in which he revised and polished his work.

* Early editions of the Poem bore the title of "The Traveller, or, A Prospect of Society." The second title was dropped in later editions.

The fragment entitled "A Prospect of Society" which is now in my possession consists of sixteen pages of the same quarto size as that in which "The Traveller" first appeared. The poem, as finally published, consisted of 416 lines*; my fragment contains 310 lines, or rather more than two-thirds of the number of lines of the complete poem. But there are, as the reader will see on comparing "A Prospect" with "The Traveller," a great number of variations in the text; while the arrangement of the lines differs altogether in the two works. It is indeed hardly correct to speak of the arrangement of the lines in "A Prospect," since it becomes evident at once to the reader that they are put together without order or method, and that their author could never have intended to publish them as they stood. It is, in fact, rather difficult to understand why they should have been printed at all in so formless and incomplete a state. Possibly Goldsmith's object in printing "A Prospect" was that he might submit it to some of his friends in order to obtain the benefit of their suggestions upon it. Or he may have thought that, when he had the verses before him in print, he would be able to see more clearly what amendments they required.

If the reader will now peruse the first eighteen lines of "A Prospect" and then refer to lines 353-370 of "The

* This applies to the first edition only; later editions contained additional verses.

Traveller," he will see that there are numerous variations in them. Thus, the second line of "A Prospect" has been improved into

And scholars, soldiers, kings, unhonor'd die.

The fifth and sixth lines of "A Prospect" are, very judiciously, replaced by two much superior verses; but I am not sure that, in altering the seventh and eighth lines into

*But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own—*

the author has improved them. The eleventh line also seems to lose something in vigour and force as altered into

Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw;

while

Tear off reserve and bare my swelling heart

is rather a watering down of

To tear the barb that grides my swelling heart.

Lines 19 to 44 of "A Prospect" are represented in "The Traveller" by lines 371-400. The reader will find, on comparing the two versions, that there are many variations in the readings. As all who are interested in the matter can easily make the comparison for themselves, I need do no more here than note such differences as seem to be of particular significance.

Perhaps the least happy alteration in the lines I have just referred to is that which the author made in the second line. While Goldsmith, in "A Prospect," curses the ambition which "toiled for foreign power," we find him in "The Traveller" uttering his malediction upon those who "struck at regal power"—surely a very different thing. The passage, as finally altered, is not free from inconsistency; for while the author sets out to denounce one sort of ambition, he abandons this design after the fourth line and goes on to denounce what we now call Jingoism or Imperialism. This inconsistency, as the reader has seen, does not appear in the original reading, which is from first to last a denunciation of the greed for gold and foreign conquest. Another point in which, as it seems to me, the original reading is to be preferred is in the line

An hundred villages in ruin fall?

which is a stronger line than

The smiling long-frequented village fall.

The "famish'd exile" also of the original draft is surely better than the "pensive exile" of the revision. On the other hand, the line

To stop too fearful and too faint to go—

with which Dr. Johnson replaced Goldsmith's

And faintly fainter, fainter seems to go—

is assuredly a great improvement upon it.

Lines 43-4 of the passage from "A Prospect" to which I am referring are obviously out of place there. In "The Traveller" they take their place at the conclusion of the description of Holland and of its people (ll. 309-312)—

*Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold ;
War in each breast and freedom on each brow ;
How much unlike the sons of Britain now !*

Lines 45 to 84 of "A Prospect" are represented in "The Traveller" by lines 313 to 352 ; while the next sixteen lines of the former correspond with lines 277 to 292 of the latter. As before there are numerous variations in the two versions ; while the readings of "The Traveller" are usually much superior to those of "A Prospect." Lines 93-100 of the latter should be compared carefully with lines 285-292 of "The Traveller," as giving a typical example of Goldsmith's careful revision of his work.

I will now leave the reader to make his own observations on the remaining minor differences between the two texts, confining myself in what follows to a few general remarks. Perhaps the most remarkable thing

about "A Prospect of Society" is the manner in which passages clearly unrelated to each other are run together without any indication of the change of subject. Goldsmith tells us in the dedication of "The Traveller" to his brother, that he had sent him a part of the poem, as it was originally written, from Switzerland. One would conclude from this statement and from a perusal of the poem as finally completed, that each section of it, if not the whole, was composed with a clear idea in the author's mind as to his purpose and the end he had in view. The evidence furnished by "A Prospect" hardly warrants us in saying positively that this was not the case; but certainly it shows that Goldsmith, if he knew exactly what he wanted to say, did not at first succeed in saying it in the best and happiest manner. Of course this is just what might be expected, for there are few, if any, authors whose inspiration enables them to find the fittest and finest expression of their ideas at the first attempt. Still it is curious that in "A Prospect" we should find so many abrupt transitions and so many passages which are obviously not in their proper places. Thus the description of France and the French people follows, without even the intervention of a full stop, on the description of Holland, and that again is mixed up with the description of Italy. How it came to pass that line 118—

Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold—

came to be followed by

Where shading elms beside the margin grew,

is a mystery which is not easy of solution. We have to go to lines 189-90—

*How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, along the sliding Loire?*

to find the couplet which should precede the last line quoted, and which, one would think, must certainly have preceded it from the first. It is no less difficult to understand how the first two lines of "A Prospect," which have no meaning as they stand, should have become divorced from lines 83-4, which they should so obviously follow. To suppose that the author's manuscript, written on loose leaves, had fallen into confusion, and was then printed without any attempt at re-arrangement, would be the easiest way of accounting for the many anomalies of "A Prospect of Society"; but even that supposition would not solve all the difficulties of the case.

My incomplete fragment does not contain anything answering to the first 72 lines of "The Traveller," nor to lines 93 to 102 of that poem. These lines, with twenty-two others, are all that are not represented in my fragment.

In "A Prospect" we are, as it were, admitted to the author's workshop; we see how conscientiously he laboured, and to what good effect. Yet even in the first rough draft it is easy to see that it was no inferior hand that fashioned it. All but two of the original verses were retained in the finished poem, though few of them

escaped alteration or revision. But it was in the manner in which a poem, remarkable for excellence of form and unity of design, was created out of a number of verses which were at first crudely conceived and loosely connected, that Goldsmith's genius was most triumphantly displayed. Wanting the masterly arrangement and patient revision which their author bestowed upon them, the verses of "A Prospect" would have remained altogether valueless. Genius, it has been said, consists in the art of taking pains. That is a very disputable proposition; but we have in "The Traveller" a remarkable instance of the fact that though a lavish expenditure of thought and pains may not be sufficient of themselves to produce a work of genius, it is at least certain that such a work cannot be produced without them. A study of "A Prospect of Society" as compared with "The Traveller" may be recommended to every writer who believes that if inspiration be present the labour of revision and correction may be dispensed with.

Perhaps Goldsmith, of all our authors of the eighteenth century, is the one who most favourably and most completely represents its spirit and tendencies. Whether he was the greatest author of the period is not here the question; I only assert that he was the best representative of its finest qualities. He was, as it seems to me, altogether a man of his time, neither looking backward to the past, nor forward to the future. So far as he was concerned, it would have made little or no difference if the literature of the Elizabethan and Jacobean times had

never existed ; and it probably never occurred to him that a more excellent way might be found than that which was then the mode. He did indeed rise far above the level of most of his contemporaries ; but his methods and his ideals were the same as theirs. It would be very foolish to disparage him on this account. Consciously or unconsciously, all authors (except those who are merely imitative) adopt that manner which is best suited to their individuality. No other manner than that of his own time would have suited Goldsmith so well. As poet, dramatist, and novelist, he won a threefold fame ; and the authors who have accomplished so much can be counted without going into double figures.

A

PROSPECT of SOCIETY.*

ONE sink of level avarice shall lie,
And even the worth of kings unhonor'd die.

Yet think not, thus when freedom's isles I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great ;
Think not I mean to sap my country's good ;
I would not, heaven be witness ! if I could.

But

* The reader should be informed that what follows is a page for page reprint of the original. There is a headline at the top of each page of the original up to page 12 : afterwards (as in the present reprint) there is none. It should be mentioned also that "isles" for "ills" in the third line, and "justic" for "justice" in the eleventh line, are printer's errors which occur in the original ; which is also the case with three or four other trifling mistakes.

B

2 A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

But when I see contention hem the throne,
 Abridging kingly power to stretch her own,
 When I behold a factious band agree
 To call it freedom, when themselves are free ; 10
 Senates in blood the code of justic draw,
 Laws grind the poor, and opulence the law ;
 The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
 Pillag'd from slaves, to purchase slaves at home,
 I can't forbear, but all my passions start
 To tear the barb that grides my swelling heart ;
 I can't forbear : but, half a tyrant grown,
 I wish to shrink from tyrants to the throne.

Yes, my lov'd brother, curs'd be that hour
 When first ambition toil'd for foreign power ; 20
 When Britons learnt to swell beyond their shore,
 And barter useful men for useless ore,
 To shine with splendors that destruction haste,
 Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste.
 Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,
 An hundred villages in ruin fall ?

Beheld

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY. 3

Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forc'd from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main; 30
Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thund'ring sound ?
Even now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangling forests, and through dangerous ways ;
Through woods, where beasts divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian takes a deadly aim ;
There, while above the forceful tempest flies,
And all around distressful yellings rise,
The famish'd exile bends beneath his woe,
And faintly fainter, fainter seems to go ; 40
Casts a fond look where Britain's shores recline,
And gives his griefs to sympathise with mine,
War in each breast, and freedom on each brow ;
How much unlike the sons of Britain now !

Flush'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing
And flies where Britain broods the western spring ;

Where

4 A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

Where lawns extend that spurn Arcadian pride,
 And brighter streams than fam'd Campaspe glide,
 There all around the gentlest breezes stray, 50
 There gentle music melts on every spray;
 Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
 Extremes are only in the master's mind;
 Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state.
 With daring aims, irregularly great,
 I see the lords of mankind pass me by
 With haughty port, defiance in their eye,
 Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
 By forms unfashion'd fresh from Nature's hand;
 Fierce in a native hardihood of soul, 60
 True to imagin'd right whate'er controul,
 While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
 And learns to venerate himself as man.

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictur'd here,
 Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear;
 Happy indeed, were such without alloy,
 But even from Freedom issuing ills annoy.

That

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY. 5

That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and cuts the social tie ;
There, though by circling deeps together held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ; 70
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Repress ambition struggles round her shore,
Whilst over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stopt, or phrenzy fire the wheels.

Nor rest their ills. As social bonds decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all distinction's paid to these alone,
Talent must sink, and merit weep unknown ; 80
Till Time may come, when, stript of all her charms,
That land of scholars, and that nurse of arms ;
Where ancestry avows the noble claim,
And statesmen toil, and poets pant for fame ;
To men of other minds my fancy flies,
Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies,

6 A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
Where the broad ocean leans against the land,
And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride, 90
That spreads its arms amidst the swelling main,
And scoops an empire from the watry reign.
Onward methinks, and diligently slow
The firm connected bulwark seems to go ;
While ocean pent, and rising o'er the pile,
Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile.
The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,
The willow tufted bank, the gliding sail,
Plains, forests, towns, in gay profession drest,
A new creation ravish'd from his breast. 100

Thus, while around the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each breast obtain,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings.

Are

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY. 7

Are here display'd. Their much-lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts ;
But turn the medal, craft and fraud appear,
Even liberty itself is barter'd here. 110
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys :
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves, '
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And calm beneath their injuries conform,
Dull as their lakes, quiescent in a storm.

Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !
Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold ;
Where shading elms beside the margin grew,
And freshen'd from the waves the Zephyr blew ; 120
And haply, tho' my harsh touch faltering still,
But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill ;
Yet would the village praise my wond'rous power,
And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.
Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days,
Have led their children through the mirthful maze,

And

8 A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burthen of threescore.

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly strenuous rolls their world away : 130
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts its splendid traffic round the land :
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise ;
They please, are pleas'd, they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem. 140

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise ;
For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought,
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.

Hence

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY. 9

Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart ;
Here vanity assumes the pert grimace,
And trims her robes of frize with copper lace, 150
Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
To boast one splendid dish for once a year ;
And scarce a man is found, who rightly weighs
The solid transports of internal praise.
These are the charms to barren states assign'd ;
Their wants are few, their wishes all confin'd.
Yet let them only share the praises due,
If few their wants, their pleasures are but few ;
Since every want, that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a means of pleasure when possest. 160
Hence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire, and then supplies ;
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy ;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.
Their level life is but a smould'ring fire,
Nor quench'd by want, nor fan'd by strong desire ;

D

Unfit

10 A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer,
On some high festival of once a year, 170
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow :
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low.
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Manners in one unmending track will run,
And love and friendship's finely pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart,
Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
May sit, like falcons cowering on the nest ; 180
But all the gentler morals, such as play
Through life's more cultur'd walks, and charm our way,
These far disperse, on timorous pinions fly,
To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.
To kinder skies : where gentler manners reign,
We turn, where France displays her bright domain.
Thou sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,

How

A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY. 11

How often have I led thy sportive choir,
With tuneless pipe, along the sliding Loire? 190
No vernal bloom their torpid rocks display,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May;
No Zephyr fondly soothes the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and frowning storms invest.
Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot, the lot of all;
See no contiguous palace rear its head
To shame the meanness of his humble shed; 200
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loath his vegetable meal;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his vent'rous plow-share to the steep;
Or seeks the den where snow tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day. 210
At

12 A PROSPECT OF SOCIETY.

At night returning, every labour sped,
 He sits him down the monarch of a shed ;
 Smiles by his chearful fire, and round surveys
 His childrens looks, that brighten at the blaze :
 While his lov'd partner, boastful of her hoard,
 Displays the cleanly platter on the board ;
 And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
 With many a tale repays the nightly bed.
 Thus every good his native wilds impart,
 Imprints the patriot passion at his heart. 220
 Dear in that shed to which his soul conforms,
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ;
 And as a babe, when scaring sounds molest,
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
 So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
 But bind him to his native mountains more.
 For wealth was theirs, nor far remov'd the date,
 When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state :
 At her command the palace learnt to rise,
 Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies ; 230
 The canvas glow'd with animation warm,
 The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form.

Bu

But, more unstable than the southern gale,
Soon Commerce turn'd on other shores her sail ;
And late, the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Their former strength was now plethoric ill.

Yet, though to fortune lost, there still abide
Some splendid arts, the wrecks of former pride ;
From which the feeble heart and long fall'n mind
An easy compensation seems to find. 240
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The paste-board triumph and the cavalcade ;
Processions form'd for piety and love,
A mistress or a saint in every grove.
At sports like these are all their cares beguil'd,
The sports of children satisfy the child ;
At sports like these, while foreign arms advance,
They proudly swell, and leave the world to chance.

When strenuous aims have suffer'd long controul,
They leave at last, or feebly man the soul ; 250
While low delights, succeeding fast behind,
In happier meanness occupy the mind :

As in those domes, where Cæsars once bore sway,
But now by time dismantled in decay,
Amidst the ruin, heedless of the dead,
The shelter-seeking peasant builds his shed,
And, wond'ring man could want the larger pile,
Exults, and owns his cottage with a smile.

My soul turn from them, turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display, 260
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansions tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread ;
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword.
Far to the right, where Appenine ascends
Bright as the summer, Italy extends ;
Her uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
Woods over woods, in gay theatric pride ;
While oft some temples mould'ring tops between,
With venerable grandeur marks the scene. 270

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest.

Whatever

Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise or humbly court the ground,
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
That dress in bright succession round the year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal leaves that blossom but to die ;
These here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ; 280
While sea-borne gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all the nation knows.
In rich luxuriance plants and flowers appear,
Men seem the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all their manners reign,
Though poor, luxurious, though submissive, vain,
Though grave, yet trifling, zealous, yet untrue,
And even in penance planning sins anew. 290
All ills are here to pejorate the mind,
That opulence departed leaves behind ;

Nor

Nor less the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
His first best country ever is at home.

And yet, perhaps, if states with states we scan,
Or estimate their bliss on Reason's plan,
Though patriots flatter, and though fools contend,
We still shall find the doubtful scale depend ;
Find that each good, by Art or Nature given,
To these or those, but makes the balance even. 300

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her blessings at Industry's call ;
And though the rigid clime or rough rocks frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.

From Art more various are the blessings sent ;
Wealth, splendours, freedom, honour, and content :
Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
That either seems subversive of the rest.
Hence e'ery state, to one lov'd blessing prone,
Chiefly conforms itself to that alone. 310
Each

[The fragment ends here : whether any more of it was ever
printed must probably remain unknown.]

THE
TRAVELLER,
OR A
PROSPECT of SOCIETY.

[Price One Shilling and Sixpence.]

THE
TRAVELLER,
OR A
PROSPECT of SOCIETY.
A
P O E M.

INSCRIBED TO THE
REV. MR. HENRY GOLDSMITH.
BY
OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

L O N D O N :
Printed for J. NEWBERRY, in St. Paul's Church-yard.
MDCCLXV.

TO THE
REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH.

Dear Sir,

I AM sensible that the friendship between us can acquire no new force from the ceremonies of a Dedication ; and perhaps it demands an excuse thus to prefix your name to my attempts, which you decline giving with your own. But as a part of this Poem was formerly written to you from Switzerland, the whole can now, with propriety, be only inscribed to you. It will also throw a light upon many parts of it, when the reader understands that it is addressed to a man, who, despising Fame and Fortune, has retired early to Happiness and Obscurity, with an income of forty pounds a year.

I now perceive, my dear brother, the wisdom of your humble choice. You have entered upon a sacred office, where the harvest is great, and the labourers are but few ;
a while

while you have left the field of Ambition, where the labourers are many, and the harvest not worth carrying away. But of all kinds of ambition, as things are now circumstanced, perhaps that which pursues poetical fame, is the wildest. What from the encreased refinement of the times, from the diversity of judgments produced by opposing systems of criticism, and from the more prevalent divisions of opinion influenced by party, the strongest and happiest efforts can expect to please but in a very narrow circle. Though the poet were as sure of his aim as the imperial archer of antiquity, who boasted that he never missed the heart ; yet would many of his shafts now fly at random, for the heart is too often in the wrong place.

Poetry makes a principal amusement among unpolished nations ; but in a country verging to the extremes of refinement, Painting and Music come in for a share. And as they offer the feeble mind a less laborious entertainment, they at first rival Poetry, and at length supplant her ; they engross all favour to themselves, and though but younger sisters, seize upon the elder's birth-right.

Yet,

DEDICATION.

iii

Yet, however this art may be neglected by the powerful, it is still in greater danger from the mistaken efforts of the learned to improve it. What criticisms have we not heard of late in favour of blank verse, and Pindaric odes, chorusses, anapests and iambics, alliterative care, and happy negligence. Every absurdity has now a champion to defend it, and as he is generally much in the wrong, so he has always much to say.

But there is an enemy to this art still more dangerous, I mean party. Party entirely distorts the judgment, and destroys the taste. A mind capable of relishing general beauty, when once infected with this disease, can only find pleasure in what contributes to encrease the distemper. Like the tyger, that seldom desists from pursuing man after having once preyed upon human flesh, the reader, who has once gratified his appetite with calumny, makes, ever after, the most agreeable feast upon murdered reputation. Such readers generally admire some half-witted thing, who wants to be thought a bold man, having lost the character of a wise one. Him they dignify with the name of poet; his lampoons are called satires,

satires, his turbulence is said to be force, and his phrenzy fire.

What reception a Poem may find, which has neither abuse, party, nor blank verse to support it, I cannot tell, nor am I much solicitous to know. My aims are right. Without espousing the cause of any party, I have attempted to moderate the rage of all. I have endeavoured to shew, that there may be equal happiness in other states, though differently governed from our own; that each state has a peculiar principle of happiness, and that this principle in each state, and in our own in particular, may be carried to a mischievous excess. There are few can judge, better than yourself, How far these positions are illustrated in this Poem.

I am, Sir,

Your most affectionate Brother,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE
TRAVELLER,
OR A
PROSPECT of SOCIETY.

REMOTE, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Or by the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po ;
Or onward, where the rude Carinthian boor
Against the houseless stranger shuts the door ;
Or where Campania's plain forsaken lies,
A weary waste expanded to the skies.

B

Where'er

Where'er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untravell'd fondly turns to thee ;
Still to my brother turns, with ceaseless pain,
And drags at each remove a lengthening chain. 10

Eternal blessings crown my earliest friend,
And round his dwelling guardian saints attend ;
Blest be that spot, where chearful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire ;
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair ;
Blest be those feasts where mirth and peace abound,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale, 20
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good.

But me, not destin'd such delights to share,
My prime of life in wand'ring spent and care :
Impell'd with steps, unceasing to pursue
Some fleeting good, that mocks me with the view ;
That

THE TRAVELLER.

3

That, like the circle bounding earth and skies,
Allures from far, yet, as I follow, flies ;
My fortune leads to traverse realms alone,
And find no spot of all the world my own.

30

Even now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend ;
And, plac'd on high above the storm's career,
Look downward where an hundred realms appear ;
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extended wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.

When thus Creation's charms around combine,
Amidst the store, 'twere thankless to repine.
'Twere affectation all, and school-taught pride,
To spurn the splendid things by heaven supply'd. 40
Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little man ;
And wiser he, whose sympathetic mind
Exults in all the good of all mankind.
Ye glittering towns, with wealth and splendour crown'd,
Ye fields, where summer spreads profusion round,

Ye

Ye lakes, whose vessels catch the busy gale,
Ye bending swains, that dress the flow'ry vale,
For me your tributary stores combine ;
Creation's heir, the world, the world is mine. 50

As some lone miser visiting his store,
Bends at his treasure, counts, recounts it o'er ;
Hoards after hoards his rising raptures fill,
Yet still he sighs, for hoards are wanting still :
Thus to my breast alternate passions rise,
Pleas'd with each good that heaven to man supplies :
Yet oft a sigh prevails, and sorrows fall,
To see the sum of human bliss so small ;
And oft I wish, amidst the scene, to find
Some spot to real happiness consign'd, 60
Where my worn soul, each wand'ring hope at rest
May gather bliss to see my fellows blest.

Yet, where to find that happiest spot below,
Who can direct, when all pretend to know ?
The shudd'ring tenant of the frigid zone
Boldly asserts that country for his own,

Extols

THE TRAVELLER.

5

Extols the treasures of his stormy seas,
And live-long nights of revelry and ease ;
The naked Negro, panting at the line,
Boasts of his golden sands and palmy wine, 70
Basks in the glare, or stems the tepid wave,
And thanks his Gods for all the good they gave.
Nor less the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
His first best country ever is at home.

And yet, perhaps, if states with states we scan,
Or estimate their bliss on Reason's plan,
Though patriots flatter, and though fools contend,
We still shall find uncertainty suspend,
Find that each good, by Art or Nature given,
To these or those, but makes the balance even : 80
Find that the bliss of all is much the same,
And patriotic boasting reason's shame.

Nature, a mother kind alike to all,
Still grants her bliss at Labour's earnest call ;
And though rough rocks or gloomy summits frown,
These rocks, by custom, turn to beds of down.

C

From

From Art more various are the blessings sent ;
 Wealth, splendours, honor, liberty, content :
 Yet these each other's power so strong contest,
 That either seems destructive of the rest. 90
 Hence every state, to one lov'd blessing prone,
 Conforms and models life to that alone.
 Each to the favourite happiness attends,
 And spurns the plan that aims at other ends ;
 'Till, carried to excess in each domain,
 This favourite good begets peculiar pain.

But let us view these truths with closer eyes,
 And trace them through the prospect as it lies :
 Here for a while my proper cares resign'd,
 Here let me sit in sorrow for mankind, 100
 Like yon neglected shrub, at random cast,
 That shades the steep, and sighs at every blast.

Far to the right, where Appennine ascends,
 Bright as the summer, Italy extends ;
 Her uplands sloping deck the mountain's side,
 Woods over woods, in gay theatric pride ;

While

THE TRAVELLER.

7

While oft some temple's mould'ring top between,
With venerable grandeur marks the scene.

Could Nature's bounty satisfy the breast,
The sons of Italy were surely blest. 110
Whatever fruits in different climes are found,
That proudly rise or humbly court the ground,
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,
Whose bright succession decks the varied year ;
Whatever sweets salute the northern sky
With vernal lives that blossom but to die ;
These here disporting, own the kindred soil,
Nor ask luxuriance from the planter's toil ;
While sea-born gales their gelid wings expand
To winnow fragrance round the smiling land. 120

But small the bliss that sense alone bestows,
And sensual bliss is all this nation knows.
In florid beauty groves and fields appear,
Men seem the only growth that dwindles here.
Contrasted faults through all their manners reign,
Though poor, luxurious, though submissive, vain,
Though

Though grave, yet trifling, zealous, yet untrue,
And even in penance planning sins anew.
All evils here contaminate the mind,
That opulence departed, leaves behind ; 130
For wealth was theirs, nor far remov'd the date,
When commerce proudly flourish'd through the state :
At her command the palace learnt to rise,
Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies ;
The canvas glow'd beyond even Nature warm,
The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form.
But, more unsteady than the southern gale,
Soon Commerce turn'd on other shores her sail ;
And late the nation found, with fruitless skill,
Their former strength was now plethoric ill. 140

Yet, though to fortune lost, here still abide
Some splendid arts, the wrecks of former pride ;
From which the feeble heart and long fall'n mind
An easy compensation seem to find.
Here may be seen, in bloodless pomp array'd,
The paste-board triumph and the cavalcade ;

Processions

THE TRAVELLER.

11

At night returning, every labour sped,
 He sits him down the monarch of a shed ; 190
 Smiles by his chearful fire, and round surveys
 His childrens looks, that brighten at the blaze :
 While his lov'd partner boastful of her hoard,
 Displays the cleanly platter on the board;
 And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
 With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
 Imprints the patriot passion on his heart.
 Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ; 200
 And as a babe, when scaring sounds molest,
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast ;
 So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
 But bind him to his native mountains more.

These are the charms to barren states assign'd ;
 Their wants are few, their wishes all confin'd.
 Yet let them only share the praises due,
 If few their wants, their pleasures are but few ;

Since

No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword.
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May ; 170
No Zephyr fondly soothes the mountain's breast,
But meteors glare, and stormy glooms invest.
Yet still, even here, content can spread a charm,
Redress the clime, and all its rage disarm.
Though poor the peasant's hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot, the lot of all ;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head
To shame the meanness of his humble shed ;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal
To make him loath his vegetable meal ; 180
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each wish contracting, fits him to the soil.
Chearful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breasts the keen air, and carols as he goes ;
With patient angle trolls the finny deep,
Or drives his vent'rous plow-share to the steep ;
Or seeks the den where snow tracks mark the way,
And drags the struggling savage into day.

At

THE TRAVELLER.

11

At night returning, every labour sped,
 He sits him down the monarch of a shed ; 190
 Smiles by his chearful fire, and round surveys
 His childrens looks, that brighten at the blaze :
 While his lov'd partner boastful of her hoard,
 Displays the cleanly platter on the board;
 And haply too some pilgrim, thither led,
 With many a tale repays the nightly bed.

Thus every good his native wilds impart,
 Imprints the patriot passion on his heart.
 Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ; 200
 And as a babe, when scaring sounds molest,
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast ;
 So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
 But bind him to his native mountains more.

These are the charms to barren states assign'd ;
 Their wants are few, their wishes all confin'd.
 Yet let them only share the praises due,
 If few their wants, their pleasures are but few ;

Since

Since every want, that stimulates the breast,
Becomes a source of pleasure when redrest. 210
Hence from such lands each pleasing science flies,
That first excites desire, and then supplies ;
Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy ;
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,
Catch every nerve, and vibrate through the frame.
Their level life is but a smould'ring fire,
Nor quench'd by want, nor fan'd by strong desire ;
Unfit for raptures, or, if raptures cheer
On some high festival of once a year, 220
In wild excess the vulgar breast takes fire,
Till, buried in debauch, the bliss expire.

But not their joys alone thus coarsely flow ;
Their morals, like their pleasures, are but low,
For, as refinement stops, from sire to son
Unalter'd, unimprov'd their manners run,
And love's and friendship's finely pointed dart
Fall blunted from each indurated heart,

Some

THE TRAVELLER.

13

Some sterner virtues o'er the mountain's breast
 May sit, like falcons caw'ring on the nest ; 230
 But all the gentler morals, such as play
 Through life's more cultur'd walks, and charm our way,
 These far dispers'd, on timorous pinions fly,
 To sport and flutter in a kinder sky.

To kinder skies, where gentler manners reign,
 We turn ; and France displays her bright domain.
 Gay sprightly land of mirth and social ease,
 Pleas'd with thyself, whom all the world can please,
 How often have I led thy sportive choir,
 With tuneless pipe, beside the murmuring Loire ? 240
 Where shading elms along the margin grew,
 And freshen'd from the wave the Zephyr flew ;
 And haply, tho' my harsh touch faltering still,
 But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancer's skill ;
 Yet would the village praise my won'drous power,
 And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.
 Alike all ages. Dames of ancient days
 Have led their children through the mirthful maze,

E

And

And the gay grandsire, skill'd in gestic lore,
Has frisk'd beneath the burthen of threescore. 250

So blest a life these thoughtless realms display,
Thus idly busy rolls their world away :
Theirs are those arts that mind to mind endear,
For honour forms the social temper here.
Honour, that praise which real merit gains,
Or even imaginary worth obtains,
Here passes current ; paid from hand to hand,
It shifts in splendid traffic round the land :
From courts to camps, to cottages it strays,
And all are taught an avarice of praise ; 260
They please, are pleas'd, they give to get esteem,
Till, seeming blest, they grow to what they seem.

But while this softer art their bliss supplies,
It gives their follies also room to rise ;
For praise too dearly lov'd, or warmly sought,
Enfeebles all internal strength of thought,
And the weak soul, within itself unblest,
Leans for all pleasure on another's breast.

Hence

THE TRAVELLER.

15

Hence ostentation here, with tawdry art,
 Pants for the vulgar praise which fools impart ; 270
 Here vanity assumes her pert grimace,
 And trims her robes of frize with copper lace,
 Here beggar pride defrauds her daily cheer,
 To boast one splendid banquet once a year ;
 The mind still turns where shifting fashion draws,
 Nor weighs the solid worth of self applause.

To men of other minds my fancy flies,
 Embosom'd in the deep where Holland lies,
 Methinks her patient sons before me stand,
 Where the broad ocean leans against the land, 280
 And, sedulous to stop the coming tide,
 Lift the tall rampire's artificial pride,
 That spreads its arms amidst the watry roar,
 Scoops out an empire, and usurps the shore.
 Onward methinks, and diligently slow
 The firm connected bulwark seems to go ;
 While ocean pent, and rising o'er the pile,
 Sees an amphibious world beneath him smile.

The

The slow canal, the yellow blossom'd vale,
The willow tufted bank, the gliding sail, 290
The crowded mart, the cultivated plain,
A new creation rescu'd from his reign.

Thus, while around, the wave-subjected soil
Impels the native to repeated toil,
Industrious habits in each breast obtain,
And industry begets a love of gain.
Hence all the good from opulence that springs,
With all those ills superfluous treasure brings,
Are here display'd. Their much-lov'd wealth imparts
Convenience, plenty, elegance, and arts ; 300
But view them closer, craft and fraud appear,
Even liberty itself is barter'd here.
At gold's superior charms all freedom flies,
The needy sell it, and the rich man buys :
A land of tyrants, and a den of slaves,
Here wretches seek dishonourable graves,
And calmly bent, to servitude conform,
Dull as their lakes that sleep beneath the storm.

Heavens !

THE TRAVELLER.

17

Heavens ! how unlike their Belgic sires of old !
 Rough, poor, content, ungovernably bold ; 310
 War in each breast, and freedom on each brow ;
 How much unlike the sons of Britain now !

Fir'd at the sound, my genius spreads her wing,
 And flies where Britain broods the western spring ;
 Where lawns extend that scorn Arcadian pride,
 And brighter streams than fam'd Hydaspis glide,
 There all around the gentlest breezes stray,
 There gentle music melts on every spray ;
 Creation's mildest charms are there combin'd,
 Extremes are only in the master's mind ; 320
 Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state.
 With daring aims, irregularly great,
 I see the lords of human kind pass by
 Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
 Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
 By forms unfashion'd, fresh from Nature's hand ;
 Fierce in a native hardness of soul,
 True to imagin'd right above controul,

F

While

While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man. 330

Thine, Freedom, thine the blessings pictur'd here,
Thine are those charms that dazzle and endear ;
Too blest indeed, were such without alloy,
But foster'd even by Freedom ills annoy :
That independence Britons prize too high,
Keeps man from man, and breaks the social tie ;
See, though by circling deeps together held,
Minds combat minds, repelling and repell'd ;
Ferments arise, imprison'd factions roar,
Represt ambition struggles round her shore, 340
Whilst over-wrought, the general system feels
Its motions stopt, or phrenzy fires the wheels.

Nor this the worst. As social bonds decay,
As duty, love, and honour fail to sway,
Fictitious bonds, the bonds of wealth and law,
Still gather strength, and force unwilling awe.
Hence all obedience bows to these alone,
And talent sinks, and merit weeps unknown ;

Till

Till Time may come, when, stript of all her charms,
That land of scholars, and that nurse of arms ; 350
Where noble stems transmit the patriot flame,
And monarchs toil, and poets pant for fame ;
One sink of level avarice shall lie,
And scholars, soldiers, kings unhonour'd die.

Yet think not thus, when Freedom's ills I state,
I mean to flatter kings, or court the great ;
Perish the wish ; for, inly satisfy'd,
Above their pomps I hold my ragged pride.
But when contending chiefs blockade the throne,
Contracting regal power to stretch their own, 360
When I behold a factious band agree
To call it freedom, when themselves are free ;
Each wanton judge new penal statutes draw,
Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law ;
The wealth of climes, where savage nations roam,
Pillag'd from slaves, to purchase slaves at home ;
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart ;

"Till

'Till half a patriot, half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

370

Yes, brother, curse me with that baleful hour,
When first ambition struck at regal power ;
And thus, polluting honour in its source,
Gave wealth to sway the mind with double force.
Have we not seen, round Britain's peopled shore,
Her useful sons exchange'd for useless ore ?
Seen all her triumphs but destruction haste,
Like flaring tapers brightening as they waste ;
Seen opulence, her grandeur to maintain,
Lead stern depopulation in her train,
And over fields, where scatter'd hamlets rose,
In barren solitary pomp repose ?
Have we not seen, at pleasure's lordly call,
The smiling long-frequented village fall ;
Beheld the duteous son, the sire decay'd,
The modest matron, and the blushing maid,
Forc'd from their homes, a melancholy train,
To traverse climes beyond the western main ;

380

Where

THE TRAVELLER.

21

Where wild Oswego spreads her swamps around,
And Niagara stuns with thund'ring sound ? 390

Even now, perhaps, as there some pilgrim strays
Through tangled forests, and through dangerous ways ;
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian takes a deadly aim ;
There, while above the giddy tempest flies,
And all around distressful yells arise,
The pensive exile, bending with his woe,
To stop too fearful, and too faint to go,
Casts a fond look where England's glories shine,
And bids his bosom sympathize with mine. 400

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
That bliss which only centers in the mind :
Why have I stray'd, from pleasure and repose,
To seek a good each government bestows ?
In every government, though terrors reign,
Though tyrant kings, or tyrant laws restrain,
How small, of all that human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure.

G

Still

Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find : 410
With secret course, which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestic joy.
The lifted ax, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,
To men remote from power but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith and conscience all our own. 416

THE END.

NOTES.

THE first edition of "The Traveller" was published in December 1764. As is usually the case when books are published towards the end of the year, it was dated forward to the next. One copy, however, exists which has the date of 1764 on the title-page. This was probably rather a "proof" than a copy intended for sale. The Dedication in this copy—which is in the Locker-Lampson collection—is much shorter than in the later copies. It runs thus: "This Poem is inscribed to the Rev. Henry Goldsmith, M.A. By his most affectionate Brother Oliver Goldsmith."

It is stated in the various memoirs of Goldsmith that he formed the plan of "The Traveller" while wandering on the Continent in 1754-5. Goldsmith, however, in his Dedication to his brother, says no more than that a part of the poem was written to him from Switzerland. With "A Prospect of Society" before us, it seems reasonable to conclude that the poem developed itself very gradually in the author's mind, and that it was begun without any clear idea as to its general design. It is plain that the various parts of the poem were written at intervals during the nine or ten years that elapsed from the time that the first verses were composed until its publication. It is certain that they were at first very loosely con-

nected. Moreover, a poem the composition of which is spread over such a long period is certain to differ very much in its final state from its author's first conception. It is probable that Goldsmith at first intended nothing more than to record in verse some of the impressions which he received in the course of his wanderings. Perhaps it is these impressions, after all, that are the best parts of the poem, and not those in which the author assumes the part of a moral and political philosopher. These latter parts—or, at least, some of them—it may be suspected were written under the influence of Dr. Johnson, who, in addition to the ten or eleven lines which he contributed to the poem, probably assisted his friend very materially in putting it into shape. In saying this I do not intend any disparagement of Goldsmith. What he borrowed from Johnson was certainly not the most valuable part of his work. I cannot help thinking that Goldsmith, if left to himself, would have had too much good sense to conclude his poem by urging that it makes little or no difference to a man whether he lives under a good or a bad government—or, in other words, whether he is a freeman or a slave. That was a favourite idea of Dr. Johnson's; but we can easily conceive how he might have dealt with it had it been advanced by some one else. "Sir," we may imagine him to say, "it depends wholly upon the kind of person. I do not doubt that *you*, sir, might exist comfortably enough under the worst of governments, but not a man solicitous for the honour of his country, or desirous of enjoying his own self-respect."

The first edition of "The Traveller," as the reader has seen, consisted of 416 lines only. In later editions other lines were added, until the poem in the ninth edition (which was the last published in the author's lifetime) comprised 438 lines. There were, besides, many minor alterations. The latter I do not

NOTES.

iii

think I need enumerate, inasmuch as all who wish to compare the two editions can easily do so by consulting the Aldine edition of Goldsmith's Poems. But perhaps it is worth while to note the various additions to the poem which Goldsmith made from time to time as new editions of it were called for.

These added lines are as follows :

Between lines 84 and 85 :

*Wish food as well the peasant is supply'd
On Idra's cliffs as Arno's shelvy side ;*

Between lines 90 and 91 :

*Where wealth and freedom reign contentment fails,
And honour sinks where commerce long prevails.*

Between lines 138 and 139 :

*While nought remain'd of all that riches gave,
But towns unman'd, and lords without a slave :*

Between lines 198 and 199 :

*And even those ills, that round his mansion rise,
Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.*

It is rather to be regretted that the excellent couplet of the first edition (lines 357-8)—

*Perish the wish ; for inly satisfy'd
Above their pomps I hold my ragged pride,—*

is, in the ninth edition, replaced by the comparatively weak lines :

*Ye powers of truth that bid my soul aspire,
Far from my bosom drive the low desire ;*

After these lines there follows the most considerable addition to the poem :

*And thou fair Freedom, taught alike to feel
The rabble's rage, and tyrant's angry steel ;
Thou transitory flower, alike undone
By proud contempt, or favour's fostering sun,
Still may thy blooms the changeful clime endure,
I only would repress them to secure :
For just experience tells ; in every soil,
That those who think must govern those that toil ;
And all that freedom's highest aims can reach,
Is but to lay proportion'd loads on each.
Hence, should one order disproportion'd grow,
Its double weight must ruin all below.*

*O then how blind to all that truth requires,
Who think it freedom when a part aspires !
Calm is my soul, nor apt to rise in arms,
Except when fast approaching danger warms :*

"The Traveller" was Goldsmith's first considerable poetical work. As the reader has seen, it cost him much labour and much time before it was completed to his satisfaction. Fine as it is, I do not think it is nearly so fine a creation, taken as a whole, as "The Deserted Village," which probably did not cost its author half the labour and thought that he bestowed upon the earlier poem. When he wrote the later work he had gained the mastery of his material, and was able to do easily that which, in "The Traveller," was only accomplished with difficulty. The earlier poem has some passages which are perhaps as good as any in "The Deserted Village"; but the

NOTES.

v

latter has qualities of pathos and playful humour which are not so evident in "The Traveller." However favoured by nature and education, no poet reaches perfection at a bound: even a Shakespeare has to serve a long apprenticeship before he is able to produce an *Othello* or a *King Lear*. "The Traveller" is, of course, to be valued on its own account; but perhaps it is to be valued still more highly because it was the prelude to "The Deserted Village."

I have said already that I suspected that Goldsmith was more indebted to Dr. Johnson for assistance in "The Traveller" than is usually supposed. This opinion is confirmed by a note which I have found in Dr. Birkbeck Hill's "Johnsonian Miscellanies." He there states that Mr. R. B. Adams, of Buffalo, U.S.A., has a copy of the fifth edition of "The Traveller," on the title-page of which the following inscription is written in Boswell's handwriting:—

In Spring, 1773, Dr. Johnson, at my desire, marked with a pencil the lines in this admirable poem which he furnished, viz., l. 18 on p. 23, and from the third line on the last page to the end, except the last couplet but one. These (he said) are all of which I can be sure.

Johnson's words imply that he made other additions to the poem, but that after so long an interval of time he could not be certain of them. I think myself that his additions to the poem were not much more extensive than those which he pointed out to Boswell, but that he suggested a good many ideas to the author, and, in some cases, modified passages which Goldsmith had written. I have already pointed out that while Goldsmith in "A Prospect of Society" cursed the ambition which "toiled for foreign power," he altered this in "The Traveller" to a malediction upon those who "struck at

regal power." I have little doubt that this was at Johnson's suggestion; and I think that we may trace his influence in a good many passages from line 355 to the end of the poem.

Let the reader compare the lines—

*Yes, brother, curse with me that baleful hour,
When first ambition struck at regal power—*

with the following extract from Boswell's Life of Johnson :

Sir Adam Ferguson suggested that luxury corrupts a people, and destroys the spirit of liberty. JOHNSON: Sir, that is all visionary. I would not give half a guinea to live under one form of government rather than another. It is of no moment to the happiness of an individual. Sir, the danger of the abuse of power is nothing to a private man. What Frenchman is prevented passing his life as he pleases? SIR ADAM: But, sir, in the British Constitution it is surely of importance to keep up a spirit in the people, so as to preserve a balance against the crown. JOHNSON: Sir, I perceive you are a vile Whig. Why all this childish jealousy of the power of the crown? The crown has not power enough.

The crown, unfortunately, had power enough to lose us the empire of America. How much more power would Johnson have given it? The kindest construction we can put upon his words in this, as in so many other cases, is that he was speaking out of a spirit of contradiction rather than from a deliberate and settled opinion.

THOMSON'S (JAMES "B.V.") POETICAL WORKS.
With Memoir and Portrait. 2 vols., post 8vo, 12s. 6d.

THOMSON'S (JAMES) THE CITY OF DREADFUL
NIGHT, and other Poems. 16mo, cloth, 3s. 6d ; or in
parchment binding, gilt top, 5s.

THOMSON'S (JAMES) BIOGRAPHICAL AND
CRITICAL STUDIES. Cr. 8vo, cloth, 6s.

THOMSON'S (JAMES) SHELLEY : a Poem. With other
Writings relating to Shelley, and an Essay on the Poems of
William Blake. [Out of print.]

SHELLEY'S (P. B.) ALASTOR, and other Poems. A Fac-
simile Reprint. Edited for the Shelley Society.

SHELLEY'S (P. B.) THE WANDERING JEW. Edited
For the Shelley Society.

CATALOGUE OF A COLLECTION OF BOOKS.
Printed for private circulation. Parts I., II. and III.
1s. each.

Books preparing for Publication.

SIDELIGHTS ON CHARLES LAMB.

This work will contain much new matter relative to
Charles Lamb, his Works, and his Friends. I have now in
my hands the papers of Thomas Manning, one of Lamb's
most intimate friends ; besides much other original material,
out of which I hope to compile a volume of more than
common interest.

THE POETICAL WORKS
OF
THOMAS TRAHERNE, B.D.

Now first published from the original Manuscripts.

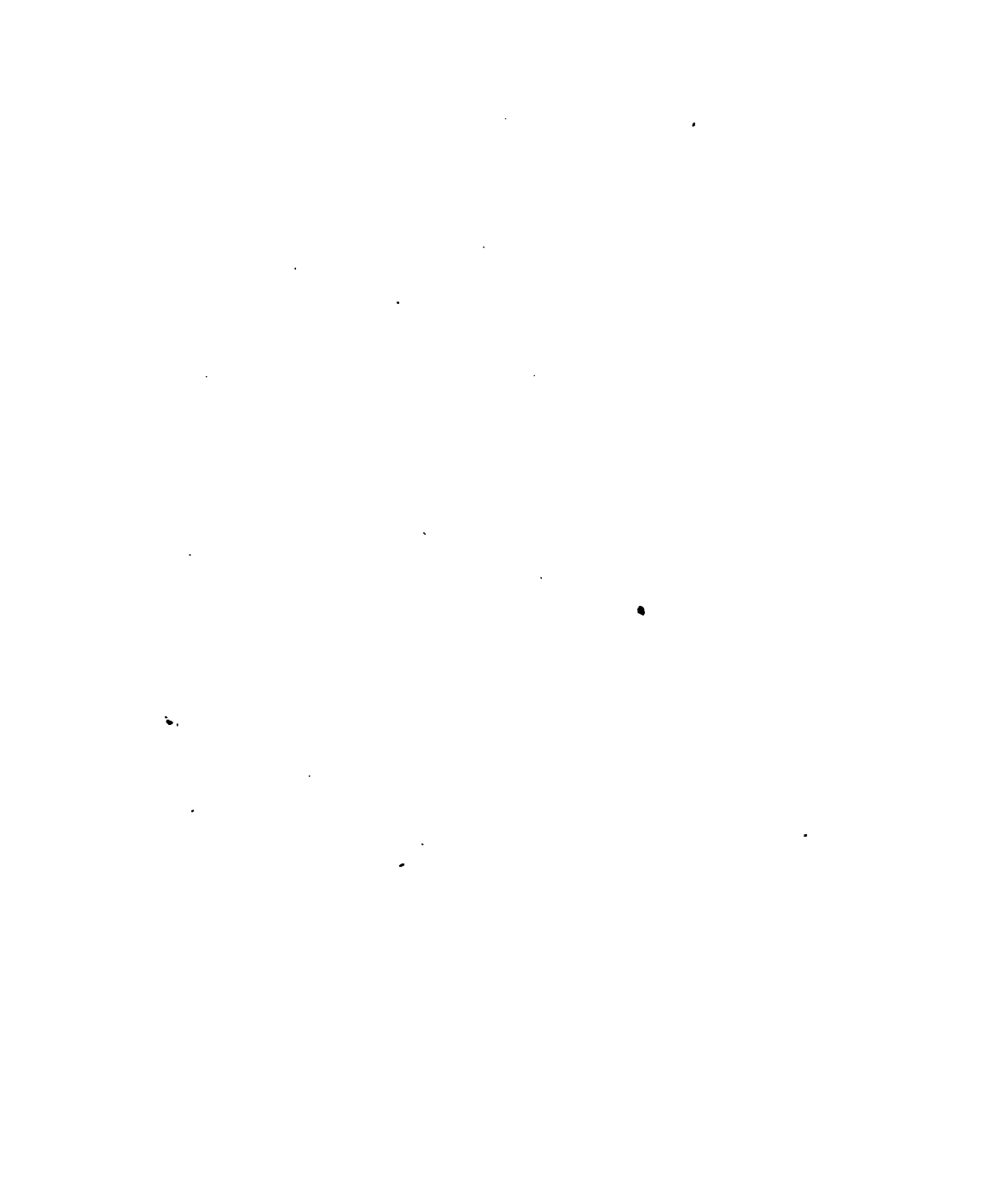
In the pages of the *Athenæum* (April 7 and 14, 1900) I have given an account of the strange history of these poems, which, after nearly two centuries and a half of obscurity, have emerged into light. The late Dr. Grosart believed these poems to be the work of Henry Vaughan, the Silurist; and he had actually prepared them for the press under the influence of that belief. It has been my good fortune, however, to discover their real author, and thus to add another name to that small group of poets to which Herbert, Crashaw, and Vaughan belong.

ROSEMARY AND PANSIES.

*"There's rosemary for you, that's for remembrance; pray,
love, remember: and there's pansies, that's for thoughts."*

—HAMLET, Act iv., Sc. v.

Early in 1901 I printed an edition of seventy-five copies only of the above volume of poems for private circulation. The book having been received with much more favour than I expected, I have determined to reprint it, though with a good many omissions, and some additions. I hope to publish the book about September or October next.







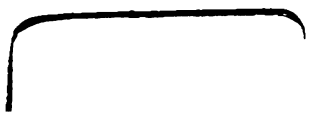
APR 10 1984

4 73 25

RECEIVED

MAR 25 1984

475 H



16486.36

A prospect of society /

Widener Library

000899361



3 2044 086 773 710